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Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary

The sanctuary held its annual Shipwreck Reconnaissance Expedition. The expedition successfully completed the first phase of installing permanent datums (fixed reference points on an archaeological site from which measurements can be taken and from which future site location and surveys can be based) at the shipwreck sites of the *Winfield Scott* and *Aggi*. The expedition, in collaboration with the Channel Islands National Park and Coastal Maritime Archaeology Resources group, installed a total of eight datums over the course of the five-day mission. The program consists of installing permanently imbedded datums into the sea floor and/or rocks contiguous to selected shipwreck sites. Each datum will serve as a reference point for establishing Differential Global Position System positions. With a series of datum locations, accurate measurements can be established for recording the current positions of submerged artifacts. The datums will also be utilized for permanent camera positions for recording still and videotape documentation of major artifacts.

Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary

The sanctuary celebrated its 15th anniversary with an event at the sanctuary office on October 2. More than 100 invited guests attended including representatives from Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey and Senator Barbara Boxer's office. Both presented the sanctuary with congressional certificates of recognition. Members of the original Cordell Expeditions dive team also attended and brought memorabilia from the early expeditions to Cordell Bank. Sanctuary advisory council members, the commanding officer from the Coast Guard's San Francisco Bay Marine Safety Office, the superintendent of Point Reyes National Seashore, associates from the research and education community and friends from the local community rounded out the attendance. Highlights included a presentation from Congresswoman Woolsey honoring Ed Ueber, the first sanctuary manager, a new sanctuary puppet show with a marine conservation message, an oil painting exhibit featuring all things marine and the new zooplankton exhibit now hanging in the Cordell Bank office.

Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary

The sanctuary research team was invited to conduct ROV activities on board one of NASA's rocket booster recovery vessels for a period of 10 days, beginning October 25. The ship time was offered to the National Undersea Research Center (NURC), at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, who offered this resource to the sanctuary. The 176' NASA vessel *Liberty Star* was in the Gulf of Mexico and based operations out of Tampa, FL. NURC provided their Phantom S2 ROV and pilot at no cost. This opportunity allowed the sanctuary to continue the deepwater characterization surveys and collections at selected reefs and banks on the continental shelf of the North-

western Gulf of Mexico - an ongoing effort that has resulted in more than 130 deepwater surveys and more than 160 biological samples. Surveys ranged from approximately 70-175 meters depth. The objective for this cruise was to continue groundtruthing the high-resolution bathymetry of the area for habitat characterization purposes and to collect and characterize the sponges of the region.

Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary

The sanctuary's research area working group met in Savannah early in October. This second workshop was planned and led by Research Coordinator Greg McFall and Regional Projects Coordinator Jim Sullivan; Headquarters' Paul Orlando facilitated. NMSP Research Coordinator Steve Gittings and Florida Keys NMS Research Coordinator Brian Keller also participated. The two-day workshop ended with the broad-based group identifying experimental design options for a variety of research questions. The working group expects to meet again in February 2005 after NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science biogeography team analyzes size and placement options. The February meeting should result in a recommendation to the full Gray's Reef Sanctuary Advisory Council on a marine research area.

October was a busy event month for sanctuary volunteers and staff, starting with the annual CoastFest celebration hosted by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. The event highlights an astounding array of coastal organizations in a fun, family-oriented environment with an emphasis on educational activities for children. This year, children visiting the booth were asked to take an ocean knowledge quiz for which they were awarded a loggerhead sea turtle poster. In mid-October, Skidaway Marine Science Campus (home of the Gray's Reef office) hosts an annual Open House for the public to learn from and explore Skidaway Institute of Oceanography, University of Georgia Marine Education Center and Aquarium, and Gray's Reef. Staff showed kids and adults how to operate a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) in the campus pool, and hosted an information table. There were many visitors to the booth and a constant stream of "potential ROV pilots" that ranged in age from 2 to 94. October is also time for the annual Coastal Georgia Birding Festival. Pelagic birding talks and field trips highlighted the weekend.

Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary

A great white shark bit a surfer, long-time Beach Watch volunteer Peter de Jung Sunday, October 10 off Limantour Beach in the Point Reyes National Seashore, prompting officials to close the waters near the site of the attack. DeJung was straddling his surfboard with his legs dangling over either side when the shark — thought to be a great white — bit the lower part of one of his legs. He was taken to Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital by a sheriff's rescue helicopter. His injuries were thought not to be life threatening. Peter has conducted Beach Watch monitoring since 1995 on the very beach where he

was attacked.

Monitor National Marine Sanctuary

The Maritime Heritage Program is featured throughout the October issue of *Dig Magazine*, a magazine for school children published in partnership with *Archaeology Magazine* through the Archaeological Institute of America. This special “Shipwrecks” issue contains two articles by John Broadwater, manager of NOAA’s *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary. One article is on the *Monitor* and the other on a Revolutionary War shipwreck, which Broadwater excavated. There is also an interview with Broadwater, an article on the Portland by Matthew Lawrence, and an article on “Preserving America’s Maritime Heritage”.

On October 24, NOAA participated in the official groundbreaking ceremony for the USS *Monitor* Center. The *Monitor* Center, scheduled to open in March 2004, and partially funded by NOAA, will consist of a large conservation facility and a comprehensive interpretive exhibition that will display the *Monitor*’s engine, turret, and other objects. All guests were invited to sign scrolls that will be placed in a time capsule with other historical items. The time capsule will be opened on March 9, 2062, the 200th Anniversary of the Battle of Hampton Roads.

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary

On October 17, approximately 70 volunteers mobilized to collect water samples of the first storm of the season from 23 storm drain outfalls in Half Moon Bay, Santa Cruz, Capitola, Seaside, Monterey, and Pacific Grove. This was the fifth annual First Flush monitoring event for the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Citizen Watershed Monitoring Network. Preliminary results indicate high bacteria, copper and zinc concentrations at the majority of sites. A summary of findings will be available early next year.

Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve and Proposed Sanctuary

Reserve and headquarters staff gave a presentation to the Science and Statistical Committee of the Western Pacific Fishing Management Council (WPFMC) and a briefing to the Reserve Advisory Council on the “Advice and Recommendations” document transmitted to WPFMC on September 20, 2003. This document provides WPFMC with guidance on how draft fishing recommendations should be written in order to be considered for use in the proposed sanctuary. WPFMC now has 120 days in which to transmit draft fishing regulations to the Secretary consistent with the proposed sanctuary’s goals and objectives, and the purposes and policies of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act. Talking points and Q&As/fact sheet were developed to assist staff in responding to constituents, general public and the media.

Researchers with various NOAA agencies are returning from the first research mission undertaken by NOAA's newly commissioned research vessel *Hi'ialakai* to conduct a comprehensive survey of marine ecosystems in the remote Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve. On Sunday, October 17, the research vessel returned to its homeport of Honolulu, successfully concluding a five-week mission, which began September 13. A dockside media event greeted the *Hi'ialakai* on Oct. 17 at Pier 45 in Honolulu.

The recent discovery by NOAA divers of shipwreck remains in the coral reefs off Pearl and Hermes Atoll has set off a firestorm of media interest. The avid coverage has raised the profile of NOAA's coral reef conservation and clean-up efforts, as well as those of the National Marine Sanctuary Program's Maritime Heritage Program and Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve.

Northwestern Hawaiian Island Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Coordinator Robert Smith retired on September 30 after 30 years in government service and overseeing the reserve's critical formative phase of growth since its inception. Four years ago, Robert was with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service when he was asked by former President Bill Clinton to launch the soon-to-be-established Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve. Robert navigated the way through formidable challenges to position the reserve well for sanctuary designation as the largest conservation project in the world and vaulted the reserve to high regard and visibility in resource protection circles around the world.

Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary/Underwater Preserve

The sanctuary/preserve signed a 20-year lease with Alpena Marc L.L.C. for the development of a new Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center and on October 26 broke ground for the facility. This center will be housed at the former Fletcher Paper Mill facility in Alpena, Michigan. NOAA has committed an initial \$2.5 million investment to renovate the historic 20,000 square-foot building. When completed, the facility will include exhibits specific to the maritime history of Thunder Bay, as well as the historic resources found within and around the sanctuary. Other areas of the center will include: an auditorium to view films and live footage from shipwrecks, an archaeological conservation laboratory, education resource room, research facilities, and administrative space. The sanctuary offices will reside in the new facility by Summer 2005.

Pacific National Marine Sanctuaries

The Honolulu staffs for NOAA's Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale NMS, Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve, and the Pacific Region have co-located to a new office just across the parking lot from

their old offices in Hawaii Kai (Honolulu). This long awaited move consolidates the NMSP offices in Honolulu and provides for more coordinated programming. The new office space also has a large meeting room that will be able to host advisory council meetings, volunteer trainings and other large groups.

National Marine Sanctuary Program

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation and the National Marine Sanctuary Program Team coordinated the Leadership Team Meeting held in New York City on September 27-October 1, 2004. There was a two-day symposium with key speakers including Dr. Richard Spinrad, Vice Admiral Paul Gaffney, Dr. Robert Ballard, David Rockefeller Jr., Leon Panetta and Dr. Paul Boyle. The meeting offered an excellent opportunity to engage the leaders and our colleagues in the greater New York metropolitan area and introduce them to the sanctuary program issues and ideas.

The program is working with Internet 2 on a demonstration of the Telepresence Project, a cutting-edge initiative that uses advanced networking to bring real-time, interactive underwater exploration into educational and research settings. On October 13, 2004, Dr. Spinrad and key members of congress were invited to the Internet2 Office in Washington, D.C. for a 30-minute narrated demonstration of a diver 60 feet below the surface of Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. The diver took questions as the audience watched the diver give an underwater “tour” of the sanctuary’s kelp forest and bottom habitat. At the same time, a remotely operated vehicle followed the diver as he filmed the dive. The high quality video and real-time interaction promises to extend the reach of marine education and outreach programming to areas far from the coast.

Staff from the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary joined headquarters staff in providing further assistance to *Washington Post* reporter Juliet Eilperin for her article on national marine sanctuaries. This included additional fact-checking, providing figures on the spatial extent of no-take areas in the sanctuary, providing information on the likelihood of additional no-take areas and arranging for the reporter to speak once more with staff of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute regarding results of lobster population monitoring in the Western Sambo Ecological Reserve, and with the science coordinator on fish populations in the reserve.